

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to urge you to oppose petition 04-160, which seeks to block satellite radio services such as Sirius and XM from providing local traffic and weather reports.

While the localism has been the ideal for U.S. broadcasting since the 1930s, consolidation with centralized programming, voicetracked DJs, and corporate management based far from most of the actual transmission sites have significantly eroded localism in recent years.

Satellite broadcasting provides quality programming that is forcing traditional broadcasters to face up to some of the problems media consolidation has brought, which is a good thing.

Petition 04-160 seeks to limit satellite radio's programming through regulation because terrestrial broadcasters cannot compete against satellite radio in terms of programming.

The fact is, the satellite-delivered traffic and weather services will air nationally -- as required by the FCC licenses granted for the satcasters -- and they will be used by listeners both within and beyond the metro area concerned.

For example, local traffic reports delivered nationally would make it easier for my family to plan drives from our home in Maryland to visit family in Massachusetts. We would know well ahead of time how bad traffic is around New York City, giving us time to plan our route. Similarly, if I need to travel to Seattle, Chicago or Los Angeles on business, I could use the satellite weather service to check the weather before flying out.

Yes, these programs would be popular locally, but they are aired nationally and have national appeal.

Again, I urge you to oppose petition 04-160.